

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

*Sub A1*  
1. A method of searching for data in one or more heterogeneous data sources within a computer system, the method comprising the steps of:  
receiving a request for data at a federated data source; and  
from the federated data source, retrieving data from one or more of one or more terminal data repositories or one or more search gateway data sources.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein each search gateway data source searches for data in one or more other data sources.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the federated data source, each terminal data repository, and each search gateway data source is a data object.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein each data object is based on a class that inherits the properties of a base data source class.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein each data object is manipulated via methods of the class on which the data object is based.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein retrieving data from one or more search gateway data sources comprises submitting an search gateway query from the federated data source to each search gateway data source.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein each terminal data repository and each search gateway data source may be queried for data directly.

1     8.     An apparatus for searching for data in one or more heterogeneous data sources,  
2           comprising:  
3           a computer system containing one or more heterogeneous data sources; and  
          one or more computer programs, performed by the computer system, for receiving a request  
for data at a federated data source and, from the federated data source, retrieving data from one or more  
of one or more terminal data repositories or one or more search gateway data sources.

1           9.     The apparatus of claim 8, wherein each search gateway data source searches for data  
2           in one or more other data sources.

1           10.    The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the federated data source, each terminal data  
2           repository, and each search gateway data source is a data object.

1           11.    The apparatus of claim 10, wherein each data object is based on a class that inherits the  
2           properties of a base data source class.

1           12.    The apparatus of claim 11, wherein each data object is manipulated via methods of the  
2           class on which the data object is based.

1           13.    The apparatus of claim 8, wherein retrieving data from one or more search gateway  
2           data sources comprises submitting a search gateway query from the federated data source to each  
3           search gateway data source.

1           14.    The apparatus of claim 8, wherein each terminal data repository and each search  
2           gateway data source may be queried for data directly.

1     15.   An article of manufacture comprising a program storage medium readable by a  
2   computer and embodying one or more instructions executable by the computer to perform method steps  
3   for searching for data in one or more heterogeneous data sources within a computer system, the  
4   method comprising the steps of:

5         receiving a request for data at a federated data source; and  
6         from the federated data source, retrieving data from one or more of one or more terminal data  
7   repositories or one or more search gateway data sources.

1         16.   The article of manufacture of claim 15, wherein each search gateway data source  
2   searches for data in one or more other data sources.

1         17.   The article of manufacture of claim 15, wherein the federated data source, each terminal  
2   data repository, and each search gateway data source is a data object.

1         18.   The article of manufacture of claim 17, wherein each data object is based on a class that  
2   inherits the properties of a base data source class.

1         19.   The article of manufacture of claim 18, wherein each data object is manipulated via  
2   methods of the class on which the data object is based.

1         20.   The article of manufacture of claim 15, wherein retrieving data from one or more  
2   search gateway data sources comprises submitting an search gateway query from the federated data  
3   source to each search gateway data source.

1         21.   The article of manufacture of claim 15, wherein each terminal data repository and each  
2   search gateway data source may be queried for data directly.